[0017] Preferred embodiments of the present invention provide a label system wherein a label (also "retractable label" herein) comprising information printed thereon is configured to extend away from a container and retract back to its original position. Preferred embodiments provide several advantages over prior art label systems. As an example, moving at least some of the information from a conventional, stick-on label to a retractable label permits the usage of smaller and/or fewer labels, enabling the contents of the bottle to be more visible. As another example, that a user has to retract the label to access its information may increase the likelihood that the information will be read. As yet another example, in some embodiments, the label can be retracted without much effort on part of the user. In some cases, a tab may be provided with the label to ensure that the instructions on the label will be read. The tab may have a textual and/or graphical warning(s) included thereon, such as, e.g., "Read Me" in red font.

[0018] It will be appreciated that "container" (or "compartment") as used herein comprises anything (e.g., carton, box, crate, or canister) that contains or can contain a solid, liquid, gas, or combinations thereof. It will be further appreciated that a container can have any geometric shape and dimension. As an example, a container can be a cylindrical canister. As another, a container can be a boxlike carton. As still another example, a container may be a crate with a length equal to its width, and a height not equal to its length.

[0019] It will be appreciated that containers of preferred embodiments may have one or more openings. An opening of preferred embodiments can have any shape and dimension. These openings include holes (e.g., rectangular holes, circular holes, triangular holes) and slits (e.g., elongated slits). In some embodiments, the holes permit the unimpeded extension and retraction of a label to and from a container housing the label.

[0020] One or more walls may define a container. The one or more walls define a container space in which material is housed (or stored). Additionally, a wall defining one container may at least partially define another container. As an example, a wall partially defining a first container may have a thicker, hollow portion at the periphery of the first container that at least partially defines a second container, the second container being adjacent the first container. The first container may be larger than the second container, of equal size as the second container, or smaller than the second container. In some embodiments, the wall is thicker in one area than another.

[0021] It will be appreciated that "label" (or "retractable label") as used herein comprises any object capable of displaying information. As an example, a label may be a piece of paper, fabric, plastic, or metal displaying information about a container and/or the contents of the container. As another example, a label may be an electronic display, the electronic display configured to display information about a container and/or the contents of a container. A label may be flexible or rigid.

[0022] Information may be displayed on one or more sides of the label. As an example, a plastic label may have information printed on both its front side and back side. As another example, a paper label may have information printed on one side, with the opposite side not displaying any information.

[0023] In preferred embodiments, a label (also "retractable label" herein) is configured to extend away from a container and retract back to the container. In some embodiments, the label extends away from the container upon the application of an external force, and retracts back toward the container upon the removal of the external force. As an example, the label may be pulled out of its original position and returned (i.e., retracted) back to its original position when it is released. As another example, a motor (e.g., electric motor) within a container having the label may extend and retract the label. Further, retractable labels of preferred embodiments can accommodate personalized (or customized) information. This information can be provided by any means possible, such as, e.g., using a printer or a pen. Additionally, retractable labels of preferred embodiments can include any information, such as, e.g., pharmaceutical information, nutritional information, promotional information, etc.

[0024] In preferred embodiments, a container is laterally disposed in relation to a space enclosed by one or more walls (collectively "wall" herein). The container comprises a retractable label. In some embodiments, the wall at least partially defines the container. In one embodiment, the wall defines a container cap. In another embodiment, the space is included in an other container for holding material. In some embodiments, the container is defined by an other wall, the other wall attached to the wall enclosing the space.

[0025] In preferred embodiments, a first container is adjacent a second container, and the second container comprises a retractable label. The first container includes a first space and the second container includes a second space. In one embodiment, the first space is of greater volume than the second space. In another embodiment, the first space is of equal volume than the second space. In yet another embodiment, the first space is of lesser volume than the second space. In preferred embodiments, the second container is laterally disposed in relation to the first space. In some embodiments, the second container is formed from a wall that at least partially defines the first container. In other embodiments, the second container is formed from a wall that is separate from the wall that at least partially defines the first container.

[0026] In preferred embodiments, the label extends out of and retracts into the second container through an opening in a wall that at least partially defines the second container. In a preferred embodiment, the opening is a slit, such as, e.g., an elongated slit. In preferred embodiments, the wall that at least partially defines the second container is a portion of a wall that at least partially defines the first container.

[0027] In other embodiments, a container cap includes a retractable label housed (or stored) in container formed from a wall that at least partially defines the cap. The wall can have any predefined thickness. The cap includes a first space and the container includes a second space. The retractable label is within the second space. The container is preferably laterally disposed in relation to the first space. In some embodiments, the container is defined by a wall that is separate from the wall defining the cap.

[0028] Reference will now be made to the Figures, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout. It will be appreciated that these Figures are not necessarily drawn to scale. Furthermore, while the description below specifies objects of particular shapes, dimensions and dispositions, the skilled artisan will readily appreciate that other combinations of shapes, dimensions and dispositions can be employed.

[0029] With reference to FIGS. **1**A and **1**B, in a preferred embodiment, a first container **1** comprises a retractable label **2** ("information sheet", as illustrated) and a cap **3**. The cap **3** seals an opening of the first container **1**. The first container **1** may be configured to hold any substance, such as, e.g., a